DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 382 433 RC 020 107

AUTHOR Weiss, Chris
TITLE Who Benefits? Gender Analysis and the Role of Nonprofits in Affecting Public Policy.
PUB DATE Mar 95
NOTE 13p.; Paper presented to the Appalachian Studies Conference (Morgantown, WV, March 1995).
PUB TYPE Speeches/Conference Papers (150) -- Reports - Descriptive (141) -- Viewpoints (Opinion/Position Papers, Essays, etc.) (120)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Advocacy; Community Development; *Economic Development; Economic Impact; *Females; Job Development; Job Training; *Nonprofit Organizations; Policy Formation; Public Policy; Rural Development; *Sex Differences; *Sex Fairness; Sex Role

ABSTRACT

This paper discusses the use of gender analysis to ensure that economic development policy has equitable consequences for women and men, and describes the role of nonprofit community organizations in promoting such analysis. Gender analysis assumes that role differences between men and women are socially defined and therefore open to change. Planners of a public policy initiative must understand the sexual division of labor and the differences in access to benefits and resources in specific situations. Questions that are key to gender analysis, or to any social analysis, focus on who does what; who has access to or control of resources and benefits; what factors influence activities, access, and control; and who is included at each project stage as informants, decision makers, service providers, and beneficiaries. Social and gender analyses ensure that more of the benefits of development accrue to the disadvantaged than the privileged, and that benefits are socially sustainable beyond the term of a project. In the past 12 years, a number of nonprofit community-based organizations have emerged that focus on women and economic development programs. Their activities include job placement and training programs, advocacy for nontraditional jobs, microenterprise training, and loan programs. As an example of the process of moving from practical needs to strategic action, the Coal Employment Project helped Appalachian women break into coal mining--nontraditional for women but one of the few decent-paying jobs in the mountains. (SV)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED 382 433

WHO BENEFITS?

GENDER ANALYSIS AND THE ROLE OF NONPROFITS IN AFFECTING PUBLIC POLICY

A PAPER PRESENTED TO THE APPALACHIAN STUDIES CONFERENCE

City, Town and Countryside:
Appalachian Community in Change

MARCH, 1995

CHRIS WEISS
RURAL STRATEGIES
P.O. BOX 2125
CHARLESTON, WV 25328
304 344-8805

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Chris Weiss

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

Rc 020107

INTRODUCTION

Public policy is often blind to the differing consequences and effects of programs and projects on women and men. Women's leadership in Third World countries have played a significant role in opening policy maker's eyes through gender analysis. Nonprofit community-based women's organizations in this country are beginning to affect planning and policy in similar ways.

This paper is the result of three years of research and writing on gender analysis as it has emerged in Africa, Latin America, and Asia and its potential for the U.S. nonprofit community. The paper will review the analysis and its use by international donors, then examine efforts in this country by organizations using gender analysis to create programs and to initiate legislation requiring gender analysis. Practical and strategic interests of women will be described as a case study of the Appalachian community in change.

At the heart of gender analysis is the understanding that in any community or location, men and women assume different social roles. Gender analysis is based on the concept of "gender" - socially defined roles and expectations of being male or female - rather than sex, or the biological differences between men and women. A gender approach does not focus on women specifically, but on gender relations, i.e. the relations between men and women.

In every society, men and women work in different areas, both inside and outside the home. Some tasks are considered women's work, others are considered men's work, leading to a recognizable

sexual division of labor. Similarly, men and women have an unequal access to resources such as time, power and income. In general, given this sexual division of labor and unequal access to resources, women are worse off than men.

If we start with the assumption that the differences between men and women are socially defined, then it is possible to change these differences. If a public policy initiative is going to improve women's position in society (or, at a minimum, not make women worse off), then planners and people involved in the project will have to have a very good understanding of the sexual division of labor and the differential in access to benefits and resources in each specific situation.

In other words, planners cannot plan for "people" or "households", they should plan for men and women, recognizing the differences between them and the work that they do. Initiatives should recognize the existing sexual division of labor but should not, in the long-term, accept it. At worse, the projects should not exacerbate the sexual division of labor. At best, programs should work to support women's efforts to gain social and economic equality.

One of the major arguments for the use of gender analysis is an argument for <u>efficiency</u>. If economic development programs are intended to reduce poverty and joblessness and create jobs, then the use of gender analysis can determine if this goal is met for both men and women in any given community. If it is only met for white men between the ages of 25 and 39, the argument can be made

that this is not an efficient use of tax dollars, because a large segment of the population that is unemployed and poor is left out. While the potential for advocates for women to use this analysis is obvious, advocates for minority youth in inner city ghettos can also use this analysis to critique plans to create jobs for young men and women.

The key to gender analysis is data collection. In order to understand the differential impact of development policies on women and men, it is necessary to collect statistics on their role in any community, however large or small. The following five questions have emerged as key to any gender analysis:[1]

* WHO DOES WHAT?
* WHO HAS ACCESS TO OR CONTROL OF RESOURCES?
* WHO HAS ACCESS TO OR CONTROL OF BENEFITS?
* WHAT FACTORS INFLUENCE ACTIVITIES, ACCESS, AND CONTROL?
* WHO IS INCLUDED AT EACH STAGE OF A PROJECT?
    - AS INFORMANTS
    - AS DECISION-MAKERS/PLANNERS
    - AS DELIVERERS OF SERVICES
    - AS BENEFICIARIES

GENDER ANALYSIS - ITS POTENTIAL

In the article "Gender, Development and Training: Raising Awareness in Development Planning" Naila Kabeer from Bangladesh, made some tongue-in-cheek comments about ways that exclude women from development resources which she called lessons from

development practice.[2] Her examples are as instructive in the U.S. system as they are overseas. She says:

* "Concentrate on things, rather than people. Concentrate on getting roads, bridges, buildings etc. built and argue that it is up to someone else to take care of the human and social implications.

* If you have to plan for people as well as things, then always use non-specific or generic categories, such as labor force, producers, consumers, poor, homeless, unemployed. This way you can maintain the illusion that you are dealing with a harmonious and internally-undifferentiated category of people, all of whose members have the same needs and will be served equally well by the same set of projects. Then you won't have to deal with the vexatious issues of conflict and power.

* If it can't be counted it doesn't count. If you have to turn to empirical information in your planning efforts, protect your ignorance about women's lives by careful selection of the kind of data you consult. Use national census data whenever possible on the grounds that other data collection is too expensive or "conceptually difficult".

* If for some reason, you have to demonstrate your gender awareness, incorporate women's needs into your project planning, but use a selective definition of these needs. Ignore the power relationships between men and women within the family, work, and community and the unequal distribution of resources."

Susan Buckley from the University of Iowa has circulated a

concrete example of what happens when generic categories are used.

> "At the University of Iowa there are roughly 2200 tenured track faculty and 4500 professional-scientific (P&S) staff. Historically the annual percent increase granted to these two groups has been the same. However, four years ago the state legislature, Board of Regents, and university administration believed that to remain competitive nationally for faculty, the percent increase should be different for faculty and P&S staff. Hence, for three consecutive years, salaries were "decoupled"; faculty got a greater percent increase than staff. One, of course, could point to the obvious "class" distinction in this action. However, right below the surface was a huge gender impact. The faculty is overwhelmingly male; the P&S staff is over two-thirds female. Obvious you say? Yes, but the disparate impact on salary based on gender was <u>never</u> discussed prior to implementation - and that by an institution that spews forth an amazing amount of rhetoric on salary equity, comparable worth, etc. It took over three years to undo this policy."[3]

GENDER ANALYSIS AND PUBLIC POLICY

In a Handbook for Social/Gender Analysis prepared by the Coady International Institute for the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA),[4] the author states that there are at least two reasons why social/gender analysis is important in the context of economic and community development today: first, it ensures that more of the benefits of development accrue to the disadvantaged than to those already privileged; and second, it ensures that the benefits are sustainable, not only technically and materially but socially as well, beyond the term of a project or program. Either of these reasons is sufficient for making the argument that every economic development project in the United States, from those conceived by state governments to the plans made in the wake of the riots in Los Angeles, should be subjected to gender and social analysis.

The concept and methodology of gender analysis are so new in the United States that there isn't much to go on to demonstrate its use or to train economic development professionals in its use. This may change in the next year or two as the economic development field gets more sophisticated and more women become involved in development planning. Many of these women are coming up from the ranks via non-profit organizations who have been involved in programming for women and economic development. Here are some examples.

* In Maine, Coastal Enterprises Institute has set up a special fund to capitalize day care centers, focusing on technical assistance in business planning, analysis of funding streams, and site selection to make these businesses competitive in the market. They did this because gender analysis indicates that women in Maine cannot participate fully in the labor force until family and day care issues are met. [5]

* In Burlington, Vermont, the City Economic Development Department commissioned a study of the City's economic strengths and weaknesses. The report indicated the "particular groups exist for whom the region's prosperity is merely someone else's good news. Foremost among these are low income single female heads of household, a group in need of significant city and regional attention." [6] The solution was a training program for women in the building trades and placement into the region's burgeoning construction industry. To insure the benefits of this analysis and training, the City passed an ordinance mandating the hiring of

women in construction - at least 10% per cent for construction contracts in the city for projects over $50,000 involving public funds.

* In Montana, WEDGO, a women's economic development organization works closely with the state's prosperous tourism industry to encourage the formation and support of women-owned businesses in guiding, hunting and fishing, and white-water rafting. They do this through a state-supported loan fund and technical assistance, as well as a gender analysis of the industry and the population which identifies the potential market niches for these businesses.[7]

* In West Virginia, a resolution was passed in the 1995 legislature calling for a task force to study and recommend future legislative action be undertaken to promote state policies directed to enhance the economic development of the women of West Virginia. This resolution was the direct result of two conferences on women and the economy, sponsored by women's organizations in WV.

An interesting question to speculate on is the potential for gender analysis to be used in states who have passed the equal rights amendment. If gender analysis could be applied to plans and expenditures of, for example, the state of Maryland and their development office, would the resources and benefits accrue to both men and women equally? If the analysis showed that women were largely ignored in the state's development agenda and resources were being targeted largely toward male-dominated industries, the state might be forced to follow Burlington's example and design

special training programs and mandate hiring practices that distributed more equally the state's tax dollars.

PRACTICAL AND STRATEGIC NEEDS

In the United States in the last twelve years, a number of non-profit community-based organizations or non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have emerged who have focused on women and economic development programs. The dual goals for these programs are empowerment and economic equity for women. The activities range from job placement and training programs, to advocacy for non-traditional jobs, to microenterprise training and loan programs.

Some of these programs provide practical solutions for women who want jobs or who want to start a small business and need credit to do so. These organizations focus on serving individual women and are often funded by government dollars. Other programs are clearly advocates for women in the policy arena and are often supported by individual donations or from private foundations that are more risk-oriented.

According to "Financing Women's Enterprise: Beyond Barriers and Bias" (Hilhorst and Oppenoorth) "The practical gender needs of women (and men) derive in part from their need to provide a livelihood for themselves and their families."...Strategic gender needs are related to the need of women for a milieu that allows them to be self-confident, to articulate their views, and to acquire more say in decision making, an improved negotiating

position, plus access to power structures; and if they so choose, to organize themselves to strive for structural social change. Strategic gender interests, unlike practical gender needs, cannot be observed; they must be deduced by analyzing the position of women in a given society."[8] In general, control of resources, or control of benefits from resources, reflects strategic interests, while access to these resources or benefits, reflects a practical need.

In the United States, one of the best examples of the process of moving from a practical to a strategic solution for women has been the struggle for women to break into nontraditional jobs, particularly in the construction trades. In the Appalachian states, this was played out in the coal mines, long a bastion of male supremacy.

The Coal Employment Project provides an excellent example of the process for moving from practical to strategic actions to find women jobs at a good wage. This women's organization broke a long tradition of social inequity which denied the only decent jobs to women in the Appalachian mountains. The socially-defined gender roles for women did not include working in the coal mines. Through a combination of leadership, strategic actions, and shear grit, society was forced to change its ideas of what was an acceptable job for a woman.

Gender analysis as a tool for economic development planning for West Virginia and other states in the Appalachians could go a long way to replicating some of the national and

international models that affect women specifically. But the impression that this planning tool only benefits women would be a mistake. In the Appalachians, there is a serious problem with dislocated workers in the coal industry, largely older men who have spent their lives as miners. These men often lack education since they followed their fathers into the mines at an early age when all was needed was a strong back, not a high school education. The new labor force requirements place these men at a disadvantage, and development planning and gender analysis would identify this group as a special population in need of special services.

Generally though, if one of the goals of economic development activities is to reduce poverty and increase jobs - and to do it in an equitable fashion - gender analysis is a way of understanding the social roles of women and men, the economic consequences of those roles, and the formulation of projects and proposals in the private and public sector to provide for a greater standard of living for all. It is necessary then, to examine state development plans through the eyes of gender to insure equal benefits for men and women. To do less, runs the risk of inefficient use of resources, but more importantly, perpetuates patterns of inequality that are unacceptable.

ENDNOTES

1."Gender Training and Development Planning: Learning from Experience." Conference Report, May, 1991, Bergen, Norway.

2."Gender, Development and Training: Raising Awareness in Development Planning"., Naila Kabeer

3. Susan Buckly, University of Iowa, private correspondence, Maine Women's Commission, 1992.

4.Handbook for Social/Gender Analysis, Coady International Institute for Social and Human Resources Development Division, Canadian International Development Agency, no date.

5.Coastal Enterprises, Inc. P.O. Box 268, Wiscasset, Maine 04578

6.Beth Seigal, Mt. Auburn Associates, Somerville, Mass.

7.WEDGO/WORLD, 127 N. Higgins, Missoula, MT 59802

8.Thea Hilhorst, Harry Oppenoorth Financing Women's Enterprise: Beyond barriers and bias. Royal Tropical Institute - The Netherlands, Intermediate Technology Publications - UK UNIFEM-USA